

My time at Catholic Charities' Office of Latino Affairs (2020–2021)

By Aliette Díaz-Valls



A year in Review:

Fall Semester:

- Infographics
- Translations between Spanish and English
- House of Faith project
- ACL Youth Committee (creation, chairing, and recruiting)
- Mask it up! Competition
- COVID-19 resources, support, and information (focus: decrease spread)

Spring Semester:

- Infographics
- Community Health advocates networking
- Community Health resource compilation
- Translations between Spanish and English
- ACL Youth Committee (beginning of semester)
- COVID-19 resources, support, and information (focus: increase vaccination rate)
- Asuntos Latinos Facebook page (end of semester)
- Spanish voice over of videos (how to register for the vaccine)

Fall Projects

Learning Outcomes:

- I will **gain new insights** on the issues faced by the Latinx community of the Lake County area.
- I will **increase my communication skills** by contacting different Parishes in the Lake County area about connecting with Catholic Charities about developing a space in mass to **educate members of the Latinx community** on how to stop the spread of COVID-19 and how to protect themselves from the virus.
- I will be able to demonstrate **professional development** by being the chair of the COVID-19 Youth committee.



Was I successful? Yes! #1: House of Faith


- **The House of Faith Project** served as a way to connect to Catholic Charities the different parishes in the Lake and Cook county areas which offer masses in Spanish in order to provide Christian rituals in the Latinx communities' native languages (**spirituality= a need for the community**)
- This also served as a way for religious community leaders to promote the use of covid-safe strategies such as social distancing, mask-wearing, and frequent sanitation procedures (**community education**)
- We managed to get **16 participating parishes** to offer support for the community!
- It helped me connect to the community I was serving on a **Spiritual level**, since we share the same faith (Catholicism)

Was I successful? Yes! #2 Infographics/Translations

- The main focus was always to decrease the spread of COVID-19 in the Latinx community
- In order to create these infographics, I had to **research** what the current COVID-19 and Catholic Charities protocols, resources, and other helpful information are (**gaining insights**)
- In translating documents (i.e. providing them in both Spanish and English), I was able to help the community have more access to the important information provided (**educate the community**)
- This work helped create a stronger bond between Catholic Charities (+ the services they provide) and the community which needs its support
- My **graphic design and translation skills** were also strengthened

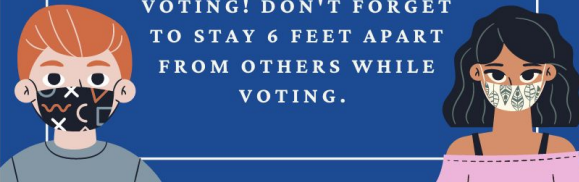
Some infographics I made and/or translated:

ACL Youth Committee reminds you to



VOTE RESPONSIBLY

BRING YOUR OWN PEN, WEAR YOUR MASK, AND WASH YOUR HANDS OR SANITIZE AFTER VOTING! DON'T FORGET TO STAY 6 FEET APART FROM OTHERS WHILE VOTING.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES
ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO



LEGAL ASSISTANCE
CATHOLIC CHARITIES CHICAGO

Offers services for people and families with eligible income who are living in vulnerable conditions in Illinois, particularly in the counties of Cook and Lake. All of our services are offered in our clients' solicited languages, be it by a bilingual person or with assistance of a translation/interpreter service.

 Family law Paternity cases, divorce, child support, decree, compliance, and changes in judicial orders	 Housing law Tenant rights, eviction comprehension and defense, security deposit affairs, and living condition infractions	 Consumer law Debt payment affairs, termination of public services and/or foreclosure affairs, unjust charging of debts and fraud and consumer fraud	 Legal services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault
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CARES IL adds COVID19 related tenant protection

 **Other legal services:** adult and minor protection, attorney power, unemployment insurance services, and erasure of criminal records through the expungement and sealing process

Call 312-948-6821 Mon-Fri from 8:30am-4:30pm or leave a message

Si usa mascarilla, protege a otras personas. Si otras personas usan mascarilla, lo protegen a usted.



Cómo ponerse la mascarilla:

*Lávese las manos antes de colocarse la mascarilla
Colóquela de tal manera que le cubra la nariz y la boca,
y asegúrela por debajo de la barbilla
Trate de que se ajuste a los lados de la cara
Asegúrese de poder respirar con facilidad
Los CDC no recomiendan el uso de mascarillas o
cubiertas de tela para el control de fuentes de infección
si tienen válvula de respiración o ventilación*



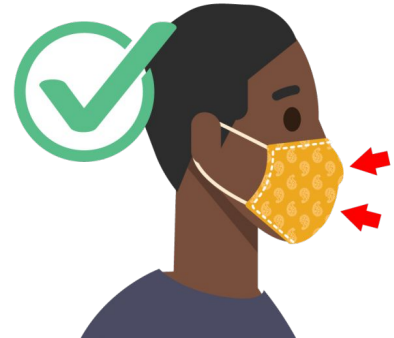
*fuente: <https://espanol.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wear-cloth-face-coverings.html> al 8/26/20

Was I successful? Yes! #3: ACL Youth Committee

- The **biggest part** of the internship for the semester (and the year)
- It was created with the sole purpose of **reaching the youth** and convincing them to protect themselves from the virus in order to **protect the more at-risk populations**
- I was selected as the **co-chair** of the committee and the representative of Catholic Charities (one of many nonprofits involved)
- It succeeded in **spreading the word** about the **resources** available for the virus, how to best protect oneself from the virus, and how to decrease the spread.

Was I successful? Yes! #3: ACL Youth Committee

- Succeeded in getting support from **community leaders** who gave talks on social media to better credit the information being shared
- Served as a **"hub"** for people to know which places in Cook and Lake county offered **COVID testing** (especially at a cheaper rate for those without insurance)
- The biggest project was the **Mask Design Competition**
- Fully made up of **volunteers** and **representatives** from different Latinx organizations from Cook and Lake County



Was I successful? Yes! #3 Mask it Up!

- The competition called Latinx youths from middle school up to second year of college to participate in **creating an original design** for a total of **5,000 masks** and **500 hand sanitizer bottles** that would be distributed to the winning person's school and to a nonprofit of choice
- We successfully **received multiple entries** and voted for a winner, Diego Chapa, a 12 year old boy.
- **Proposing, planning, developing, and achieving** the competition through all of its stages increased my responsibility, leadership, and communication skills
- It required **teamwork** with all the volunteers and my co-chair in order to achieve the final product.
- The goal was **promoting healthy mask and PPE usage** for the community

Mask it Up! Results and Flyer

ASOCIACIÓN
COMUNIDAD LATINA
AND ITS YOUTH
COMMITTEE INVITE
YOU TO:



MASK IT UP!

The first ever creative competition for Lake County!
From October 25 to November 22!

What is it? It's a competition to create a mask design that will be distributed to the community!

How do I participate? Easy! Just submit your design to Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, or TikTok while using the official hashtag, #ACLMaskitup! to be considered.

The youth committee will pick one winner. The winning design will be printed in approximately 5,000* masks and 500 hand sanitizer bottles.

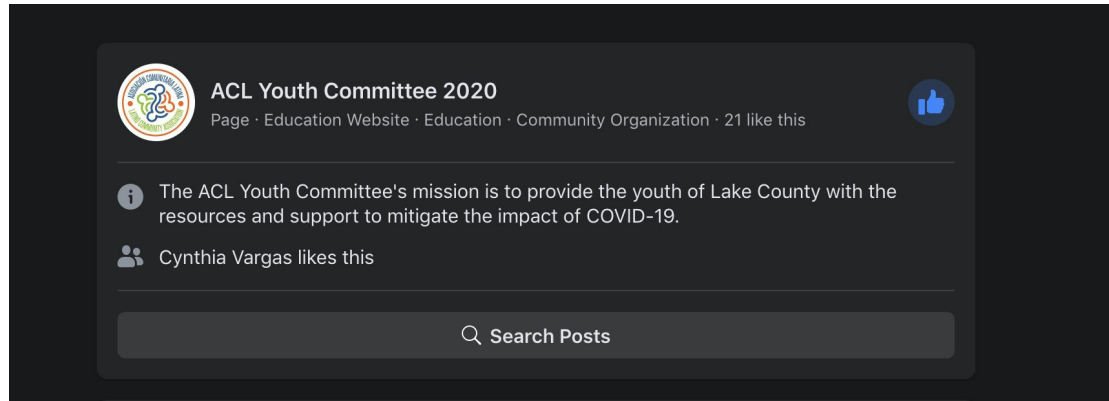
*subject to change



Above: image of winning design
Left: image of flyer I created to promote the competition

Was I successful? Yes! #4: ACL Facebook Page

- This website was used to **promote the activities, infographics, and programs** prepared by the youth committee.
- It served as **a medium between the youth** (our target audience) **and adults** who don't have access to social media in order to spread the word about how to best remain healthy during the pandemic.
- **It enhanced my communication and media management skills**

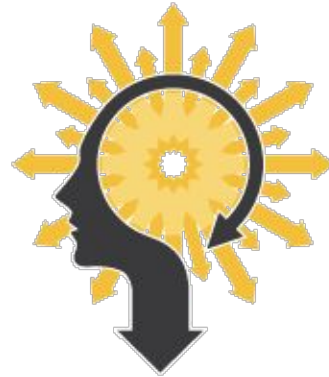


Spring Projects

Learning Outcomes:

Overall, my Spring outcomes were **continuations** of the Fall ones:

- I will be able to demonstrate **professional development** by continuing to be the chair of the ACL COVID-19 Youth committee.
- I will **increase my knowledge** of the current state of affairs by staying up to date with research and developments regarding COVID-19 and its influence on the Latinx community, especially in Chicago and Lake County.
- I will continue to develop my **communication skills** by **networking** with different organizations that may help and support the youth committee in its social justice goals



Was I successful? Yes! #1 more infographics/translations

- This time, the focus was on convincing the youth to **trust in the vaccine** and further **convince** their older relatives to get vaccinated.
- Just as last semester, this helped keep not just the **community informed** about the vaccine, but also myself and how I can **contribute to increasing vaccination rates** in my Latinx community.
- It helped further develop my **research skills** as well as **keeping me up to date** about the most relevant findings about each type of covid vaccine (**pros, cons, side effects, myths, and realities**)
- In continuing to **translate documents** (i.e. providing them in both Spanish and English), I was able to keep providing the community with more access to the **important information** provided by both medical experts and Catholic Charities (**educate the community**)
- This work helped continue to **strengthen the bond** between Catholic Charities (+ the services they provide) and the community which needs its support
- My graphic design and translation skills were also constantly being **practiced/improved**

Was I successful? Yes! #1 more infographics/translations



Conversación sobre la vacuna del COVID-19 y cómo registrarse para recibirla

Hablaremos sobre los mitos y realidades de la vacuna del COVID-19, por qué es importante vacunarse y dónde puede registrarse para que se la apliquen

Miércoles 17 de Febrero 2021
5:30 pm



Zoom ID: 880 7800 3727

Facebook Live Waukegan Public Library y ACL



Dra. Juanita Mora

Especialista en alergias e inmunología
Vocera Nacional de la Asociación
Americana del Pulmón
Directora Chicago Allergy Center



Betzy Berganza

Directora de Servicios
de Salud/Embajadora de
Salud Comunitaria
YWCA Lake County



Acompañenos a Nuestras Conferencias Educativas

MARZO



Miercoles 3 de Marzo

TUTORIAL PARA INSCRIBIRSE EN EL PORTAL ALL VAX

Edna Pompilus, LCHD

Miercoles 10 de Marzo

CONSTRUYENDO LA CAJA DE HERRAMIENTAS
PARA LA VIDA

Sandra Gomez, LCHD

Miercoles 17 de Marzo

ACTUALIZACIONES IMPORTANTES SOBRE DACA

Jocelyn Jaramillo, Caridades Catolicas

Miercoles 24 de Marzo

COMO MANEJO MIS FINANZAS

Miercoles 31 de Marzo

POR QUE ES IMPORTANTE DIVERTIRSE EN FAMILIA

Karla Barreda y Paola Silva, Universidad Iberoamericana

5:30 pm

Zoom ID: 880 7800 3727

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88078003727>

Facebook Live Waukegan Public Library y ACL



Conoce los recursos que puede encontrar en el 211, especialmente los relacionados con COVID-19 y la vacuna?



Nos acompañará Sara Martinez del 211 United Way Condado de Lake para darnos información.

Miércoles 24 de Febrero 2021
5:30 pm



Zoom ID: 880 7800 3727

Facebook Live Waukegan Public Library y ACL

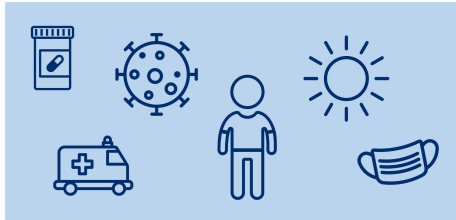


WAUKEGAN PUBLIC LIBRARY
putting quality in your life



Was I successful? Yes! #2: ACL Youth Committee/Asuntos Latinos Facebook Pages

- By posting multiple times a week about relevant information such as vaccine/testing sites, potential side effects of the vaccine, and
- My skills in **social media management, communication, and professional development** were strengthened as managing the social media pages and using them as information destinations required me to be **organized, efficient, well informed, and good with managing my time** (i.e. posting multiple times a week during the same time slot)
- Although the youth committee stopped existing at the end of the semester, at the beginning I had to continue to **develop as a leader and a professional** by managing the volunteers of the committee and networking with medical professionals who could **express the facts and disprove the myths** surrounding the COVID-19 vaccine and its side effects.



Was I successful? Yes! #3 IDPH Voice Overs

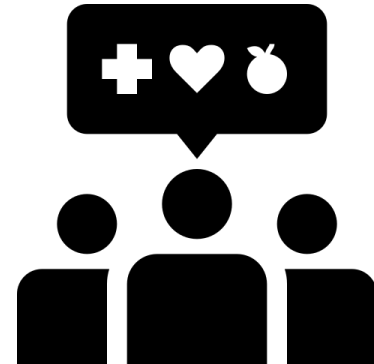
- **Translating** and providing **Spanish voice dubs** for informational videos helped **increase** the Lake County Latinx Communities **vaccine registration rates** (according to statistics acquired, people who don't speak English were **now better equipped/informed** regarding vaccine registration)
- This served as a way to **reach more individuals** and **get rid of some of the language barriers** regarding vaccination (**social justice**)



Here is one of the many videos I provided a "dub" and subtitles for

Was I successful? Yes! #4: Community Health Advocates

- This project composed of **gathering the contact information** of various community leaders in order to provide them access with the **tools and information** needed to become community health advocates.
- I strengthened my **communication and networking skills** by keeping email logs/conversations with each leader and organization involved, especially by **establishing rapport and answering their questions**.
- I was able to work on my **organizational skills** by preparing a Google Sheets document that listed each community health advocate, their organization, their contact information, and what area they are advocating for (within Cook and Lake County)



Was I successful? Yes! #5: Research Compilations

- Two main research projects:
 - 1) Research effective strategies for getting the covid 19 vaccine implemented more successfully in the latinx and other marginalized communities.
 - 2) Research information regarding Zoom fatigue, burnout, and the brain's relationship to virtual reality
- These projects supported my **research skills** as well as helped keep me **well informed** in order to help Catholic Charities better support the community
- It opened my eyes to changes I should make in my own routine in order to **decrease my own zoom fatigue and burnout**



Class Topics & Overall Reflections

Leadership Styles: Behavioral theory

- I believe that I have been able to be a **participative behavioral leader** in my role as co-chair of the youth committee.
- As the definition says, I have focused on **cultivating success** by making the pursuit of success **a team effort**, rather than of the efforts of one specific individual. I have done this by allowing every member to share their thoughts as to **feel included and fully participate** in the meetings.
- I have also done so by creating a list of tasks which are divided by committee member so that **each person has a role that changes** per event and month, to the point that everyone provides support for the success of the whole team and can learn from one another by switching roles.
- I made sure that members, after switching roles, talk about what they learned from the experience and **give their feedback and advice to others** who will take on that role next.
- It has been a **successful group strategy**, and I believe that they can follow in my footsteps (i.e. copy the behavior) if after the internship ends, one of them takes my role as chair.

Leadership Styles: Transformational Theory

- This theory emphasizes the relationship between the leader and others, and it makes clear that a leader must **inspire and influence** followers to reach their **maximum** needs and **potential**, all while **remaining committed to the team** and showing **strong leadership skills**
- As a transformational leader, I have always **treated my group members as equal**, even if I am in a higher position than they are.
- In each meeting, whenever someone in my youth committee proposes an idea, I ask them questions that will push them to **think “outside of the box”** and develop it more thoroughly.
- I also make sure that, if their ideas are approved, they are able to **be in control** of the activities regarding the idea, thus being able to let them **reach their highest potential** as leaders.
- Although I do **support and guide them**, they are able to develop their skills as leaders and are **inspired to lead others** along the way, a key of this theory.

Community Development (ABCD)



- Catholic Charities worked with some of the **community's assets** in order to **empower** them during the pandemic.
- In contacting all of the main hospitals, libraries, school district offices, and other public organizations to **provide resources for the community** and relying on their support and sites, for example, when a printing company volunteered to print our mask competition winner's design on 1,000 masks for a very cheap price, we were able to **provide resources to a larger group** of people than expected.
- I take into consideration each **individual asset my group members** are bringing, but I also understand that the community we are serving lacks access to vaccines and medical services.
- Thus, I value the **importance of the use of assets** such as hospitals, and I try my best to promote healthy solutions, **with and without the use of assets**, to the deficits that are caused by the pandemic.

Community Development (ABCD)



- Therefore, my internship is in fact contributing to my understanding of community-based development. Not only is it **exposing me to both the assets and deficits** of the latinx community of Lake and Cook county, but it is also serving as a **source of reflection** for how to better support the people who **share an identity with me** (i.e. latinx).
- It has opened my doors to understanding what **benefits and needs the community has**, as well as how I can work with both for the **empowerment** of the community.
- Similarly, I have been **exposed to services** I had no idea Catholic Charities offered, which made me consider the fact that the internship I have is and makes me an asset for the community.
- However, the internship has also taught me that **community development is not at all easy**. It has shown me that there are **too many factors to consider** when attempting to support and develop empowerment in a community, especially one as big as Cook and Lake County.
- Furthermore, it has taught me that **community development takes time** and is something that usually **occurs "behind the scenes"** and is not boasted about.

Identity and Intersectionality

- Working with the Latinx community helped me analyze and **better understand my identity** as one of them. It helped me **connect to them on a deeper level**, even if I don't experience the same needs they do due to my socioeconomic background
- This position reminded me about the **privilege that I hold**, and how that is seen in multiple parts of my identity: **my skin color (white), my social class, and my education level**
- However, I feel I have been able to use everything I have and each part of my identity in order to provide the best service I can (ex: speaking Spanish when they don't speak English)
- All of the important points of my identity intersect, such as when I am recognized as **a 21 year old (age) Latinx (ethnic identity), white (race), cisgender woman (sex/gender) and student (occupation)**, and they're present whenever and in whatever I work on and just help me reach deeper connections with the health advocates, my youth committee, and the people served.
- I **can't just take one identity and remove the others depending on my role**; they are **all ever-present** and provide me with **benefits and/or struggles** depending on the job I am performing

Final Reflection

- Throughout this internship, I learned that **social justice** is more than just advocating for those in need; in order to **empower** others you must first **understand** them, their needs, and their strengths (i.e. the whole package)
- I was able to **connect different theories** I had learned in my social work and SJI classes in order to understand how Catholic Charities worked as a non-profit and how I could be a **true leader and future professional**
- It was an experience of **immense growth** and **professional development**
- I was able to **develop a connection** with both the nonprofit and my supervisor, which could help me someday in the future (**networking/developing rapport for future leadership opportunities**)

I'd like to thank Andrew Miller, my supervisor Cary, and Catholic Charities for providing me with an unforgettable learning opportunity.

Thank You